1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

174 are thought to have arrived in the type of canoes that were still in use by their descendants in the 1700's. These craft, mostly in use in Cook's time on the northern and eastern coasts and the inland waterways, were called canoes by courtesy but were incredibly frail. They consisted of a single sheet of bark bent roughly into the shape of a boat, laced together at the ends, caulked with wild honeycomb or some vegetable gum, their sides held apart by a few sticks. Such "canoes" are little better than rafts; even in calm water they are likely to swamp, capsize, or disintegrate, and the only thing that can be said for them is that when swamped or capsized, the bark will still float, enabling the occupants to cling to the remains, at least briefly. Hanging on to a swamped sheet of bark is not an activity that merits the name seafaring, and in the shark-invested waters around the Australian coastline and in the crocodile-infested rivers of the north it is not conducive to survival. Such canoes were until recently in use here and there by Australians as these craft could be very quickly constructed. But today where the natives use [177] canoes, those made of bark have been replaced by the dugout canoe.[8] No Australian would willingly have ventured very far from land in a bark canoe, and therefore, as we said earlier, the crossing of open stretches of ocean by the first Australians on their migration down from Asia through the Indonesian islands must have been accidental and involuntary, by being blown or carried on, whether they liked it or not. In short, they finally reached the Australian coastline as castaways drifting in from the islands to the northwest or north.[9]

When they arrived on the North Australian coast, their sea wanderings were over, for they possessed no boats which could carry them onward to the far-off Pacific Islands. These first human occupants of Australia had to make the best of the inhospitable country they found. They moved into the large, empty land mass before them and their descendants remained there without much alteration in their way of life for succeeding millennia. Those who stayed near the coast or found rivers to settle along retained the use of crude bark canoes, while those who reached the desert interior forgot about them entirely.

Such a pattern of reasoning brings us to the final question: Why were these Australians left isolated from the influence of later migrants who came by way of the same series of islands? The answer is that all later migrants—whose descendants we know today as Melanesians, Polynesians, or Micronesians—had much better canoes when they left Asia. Hence they could control where they went and had greater freedom to move on further if they did not like an area where they had landed. Evidence seems to suggest that the bulk of these later peoples, and certainly the Melanesian peoples, came from the direction of Southeast Asia around the *northern* side of New Guinea

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[8] Lloyd Warner and others have established that the Australian tribes along the northern coasts learned about dugouts from Malay visitors in relatively recent times. (Warner 1937)

[9] See Andrew Sharp who has recently demonstrated this to be true for the Pacific generally. (Sharp 1957)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distributional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Australian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

[1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then, work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band [77] identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

621 Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
591 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula. People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

423 The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
621 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone— [137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather [823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since [133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

177 797 181 [8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for houseboy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[1] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

[1] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves.

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable.

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment.

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[5] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi.

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[6] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads

[5] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names.

[6] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sidelines. Two or three or four senior men would leave the spectators and range themselves alongside the accuser, spears in hand. Other senior men would quietly leave their seats and sit down in the audience alongside close relatives of the young defendant, particularly his full brothers or his father, if they were present, and gently lay restraining hands upon them. Within a few minutes there was no longer an old man facing a young man but as many as four or five old men facing one young man, and no sign of support for him. His close male relatives would keep their seats or (more often) allow themselves to be led away as if they did not want to witness what was coming next. Never, in any of these cases, did any supporter of the young man step into the ring and line up with him. He remained an isolate, faced by several older men, and of course he had no chance. It was easy to dodge the spears of one opponent, since they had to be thrown one at a time; it was impossible to dodge the spears of more than one, since they could be thrown more or less simultaneously.

Usually this baring of its teeth by society-at-large was enough. The group of elders did not need to throw many spears simultaneously. The accused capitulated by throwing aside his spears or throwing sticks, or if the defiance had been only of the mildest form—namely, an undue prolongation of the dodging—he allowed his accuser to score a direct hit and the duel ended in the normal way. In the rare cases of the accused refusing to give up, even when confronted by a menacing line of several elders, a concerted volley or two from them quickly knocked him out, and in pre-white days, usually killed him.[3] Crime thus paid even less for the accused who chose defiance than it did for the accused who allowed himself to be wounded in a duel by a doddering ancient three times his age. The greater the amount of defiance, the more clear it became that the doddering ancient, acting ostensibly as an outraged husband, was the responsible agent of society dispensing public justice. If he needed help, all responsible elders went to his aid, and the kinsmen of the accused stood aside and let justice take its course.

WARFARE Apart from the occasional castaways and the very occasional other visitors such as "Malays," the Tiwi in pre-white times had nobody to fight with except each other. Duels of the type we have just described were their only formula for settling disputes, and these occasionally became sufficiently broadened to warrant being called warfare. The expedition of Tiklauila and Rangwila to the country of the Mandiimbula which was listed in Chapter 2 among the travels of Tu'untalumi in 1928 was an example of this sort of activity. At least half a dozen senior members of the two first-named bands had disputes with various individuals among the Mandiimbula. Some of these were seduction cases but some of them involved charges by elder against elder,

[3] Since the coming of white administration, the Tiwi have found that when a man is killed in a native duel, there is a strong likelihood that white policemen will appear and will drag some of them off to Darwin where incomprehensible proceedings called murder trials then take place. To avoid such nonsense, since about 1925 they have tended to use throwing sticks rather than spears in their fighting. Throwing sticks, while dangerous, seldom kill people outright and as long as nobody is killed, the police in Darwin show no interest in native fights on the islands.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

5

Friend and Foe
(1600-1928)

ON NEARLY ALL SIDES, the emptiness of a great sea surrounded the Tiwi; to the south, the only path which might have led to the outside was blocked by the hostility of their nearest mainland neighbors. The Tiwi retained this isolation until the very end of the last century, even though for several centuries outsiders had been seen by them; ships passed along the coast and occasionally strangers landed or were cast ashore. Changes in the life on the islands were few, however, until about 1900, when the Tiwi began their integration into the modern world.

Hostility toward Outsiders (1600-1900)

Although in June of 1636 the sailor Pieter Pieterszoon in command of the ships *Cleen Amsterdam* and *Wesel* sailed along the western twenty miles of the north coast of Melville Island and named the region Van Diemensland,[1] our first real knowledge of the natives of Bathurst and Melville islands was gained by the Dutch expedition to this region in 1705 under Maarten van Delft. Men from his three ships spent about two weeks in surveying the north coast of Melville Island, the northern two-thirds of Apsley Strait between Bathurst and Melville islands, and the entire west coast of Bathurst Island.[2] They met natives several times and even allowed them aboard their ships.

Following this meeting between islanders and Europeans was a period during which the natives became extremely hostile to outsiders. Tiwi distrust of foreigners probably stemmed from these decades when the Portuguese on Timor were raiding Melville Island for slaves. Although very little has been

[1] Heeres 1899.

[2] *Ibid.* See also Mander Jones 1948 for some further data concerning Dutch knowledge of Melville Island.

[p. 96 blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1886, the Australian government tried to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, whereupon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting.

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand.

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant betrothal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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When between the mid-1920's and the early 1940's the Japanese began to give trade goods to men for sexual access to their wives, Father Gsell's missionization program ran into competition. The Japanese gave the old Tiwi males a much better deal than did Father Gsell. The Japanese with their continuous payment for access to women poured into the households of these old men the same sort of goods which Gsell provided. But in the case of the Japanese, the goods were paid time and again over a matter of years and the old father or husband was kept permanently in tobacco and food. Thus, oddly indeed, the two chief outside influences which came to bear upon the traditional Tiwi system of marriage, after about 1920, were both agencies which were anxious (for entirely different reasons and ends) to "buy" young girls and pay their ancient husbands or fathers for relinquishing them; temporarily in the case of the Japanese, permanently in the case of the missionaries. The Tiwi could scarcely be expected to cease putting a high value on women, and upon control over women, under these conditions.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

lished between the northern Tiwi and the Japanese. A government ration depot was founded at Garden Point about 1939 and many of the local Tiwi females were taken by the government to Darwin in order to stop their use by Japanese pearlers. However, by that time many Japanese half-castes had been born to the women.

In 1940, a new Catholic mission was established at Garden Point to care for these half-castes. This Melville Island Mission brought together not only the island part-aborigines, but also other Catholic half-castes from all over the Northern Territory. By late 1940, it became clear that the existence of a government depot for aborigines at Garden Point was incompatible with a policy aimed toward educating the adjacent half-caste children for life as members of the white Australian community. The government ration center was removed to Snake Bay. Also, by 1940, the government had begun to remove lepers from both Bathurst and Melville islands to a leprosarium on Channel Island in Darwin harbor. Here, over the following years, developed a community of Tiwi which often numbered as many as forty persons. At Channel Island they found themselves forcefully confined amongst natives from many mainland tribes. Tiwi who returned from Channel Island after years of residence there were more sophisticated in European ways than their fellow-tribesmen and found themselves agents of white Australian culture.

The winter (our summer) of 1941 was the last in which the Japanese came to Garden Point. The Catholic brothers who were there at the time viewed at least one extraordinary event in those months before Pearl Harbor. On this occasion, a man in the uniform of a Japanese naval officer was seen aboard the mother ship of the Japanese pearling fleet which called in at Garden Point; under Australian law neither ship nor officer were allowed within the three-mile limit. Pearl Harbor occurred a few months later.

The year 1942 brought modern warfare to the Tiwi. An American plane running out of the Philippines lacked enough fuel to get to Darwin; it landed on the small airstrip at Bathurst Island Mission. Then on February 19, 1942, Darwin was bombed. Japanese planes flew over Bathurst Island Mission on their way to commit what became "Australia's Pearl Harbor." Father McGrath, the local priest, recognized the raiders as Japanese and radioed his warning into Darwin twenty minutes before the horror commenced. The message went unheeded and the loss of life and property was great. Bathurst Island Mission was itself strafed, possibly for the attempt to warn Darwin. The bombing of Darwin left the Northern Territory in chaos. The white residents evacuated southward by any means at hand; in one case, two men drove a road grader seventy miles "down the track" before they felt safe enough to stop.

The disruption of the Tiwi community was as great as that of the white settlement at Darwin, although no Tiwi were killed in the bombing and strafing by the Japanese. The Catholic authorities realized that they could not guarantee a food supply to the natives, and the Tiwi families at the Mission were sent to the bush to support themselves. Tipperary, a Tiwi who was by 1942 an old hand in Darwin, told Pilling (1954) of the privation he had endured when he had taken to the bush and had not had a smoke for four months after the attack on Darwin.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 50 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder. But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few uncomfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Carmel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

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From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

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In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1930's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

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There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

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What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

[8] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized, especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Suddenly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[3] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[3] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pennant, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi gravepests are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

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in which they invariably succeeded. Their canoes and weapons were similar to the mainland."[4]

The probability that the Tiwi have been isolated from external influences for a long time is still further supported by their culture. Their artefacts are remarkably simple—they do not even possess a spear-thrower or small mounted stone tools—their art forms and ceremonial life are unlike those in any other part of Australia, there are no secret rituals, and the social status of the women is on a much higher plane than that of any other aboriginal women.

[4] From the evidence given above we can safely discard this writer's statement. Foelsche, who was a police officer in Darwin, probably quoted a rumour without checking its accuracy.

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CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
765 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

123 During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

123 I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
128 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven *ilenias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[46] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[46] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

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I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes.

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves.

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being.

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food.

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark.

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

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(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilanis* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbuti's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[89] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbui, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniamperi's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[89] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

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765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alowia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbuti* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the [535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *amburu* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *puke-* [616] *munis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopaditi*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

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announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61]

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbuti*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *alowia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alowia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song.

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Taduwale*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning.

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbuti's* camp and the burial ground.

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wallu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniamperi's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42).

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 23B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi.

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Neither *Jilungliahuni* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningaui*, walked round the *milimika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched (Pl. 30c).

Following the *Ningaui* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Katopi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30a) in the *milimika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30b).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

The dances started with a long *ai, ai, ai*, which announced that the boat had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their hands held above their heads, the leader chanted—

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the *pumuti*, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island man, *Nilituma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29a), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were—

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey and mosquito calls.

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533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakati*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30c).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[90]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulanimbuwi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

[535] These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 30g), while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 30o).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."

535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
765

[90] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

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765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 765 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 533 765 [302] *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* ornaments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents for the "workers".

[539] "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 431 765 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

"You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

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When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbuti* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave.

These ornaments, *Wurarbuti* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Wenimperi*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[86]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments.

Jibungliakumi, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbuti*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[87]

(d) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave.

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jibungliakumi* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives.

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his step-mother, *Dominao*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[86] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[87] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanised, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

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(c) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

[302] After a period of mourning, *Jibunglialumi* and *Wurarbuti* rose to their feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulanimbuwi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(2) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

[302] A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kisapipatu* (Pl. 27A), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

[184] The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34A, B, F), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

[177] [84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony.

[85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

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The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24B), a long sustained mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of Bathurst Island.

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jibandaui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27B) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27C) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[66] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on.

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders.

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

[66] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of Tjamalampua had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

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765 533 *Wurarbuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarbuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[97] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30j).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27d). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a [535] knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25a). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[97] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Wuniamperi*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

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533 535 766 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimiks* to the rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first [177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten- [114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and [775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea [517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the [775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these [126] illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated as an *ilania*.

[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

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765
[178] where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole) [177] was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamani* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 471–7, Pl. X.

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765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[8]

×532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 ×532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[9]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 587).

[8] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramajua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

● [177] [9] This and old *Tjimalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

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[532] [765] [114] Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of the pole shapes of eight *tudinis* and found out the meanings of five of them. These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8G, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

[177] [797] The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery.

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

11. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171] It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kado*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure (Pl. 38a, b, c), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956.

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis.

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ."

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures.

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools.

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles,

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *tudini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

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88 ill. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(3) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

372 153 In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 981 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[38]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[38] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

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how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamuni* ceremony.

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog."

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me."

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me."

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86]

Another *Mikingula*, *Pulitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42b). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Pulitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man.

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Pulitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present.

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

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Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *umaraqi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A).

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringalwa*, where the *Mikinastrinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46a).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[88] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wafjeniasi* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness.

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purutjiktini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry.

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs.

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement."

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[88] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wafjinyeri* (my *Wafjeniasi*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wafjinyeri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wafjeniasi* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Milimarina* (Pl. 42J).

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533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *tukwuli* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

[137] About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinastrininga* women collected pieces of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinastrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (1) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

881 By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, including several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539
[177] (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level than the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

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(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 252 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

881 When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the [827] hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

[177] [533] As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white man,[95] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst [412] [177] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuninga*s in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipaniatinga*s respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords [301] hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42b). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjungutis*[96] (Pl. 42d and c), and cane

[95] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[96] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjungutis*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *akurimi*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

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177 *Wurarlui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tadawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, [535] *Purutjiktini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 302). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamani* ceremony, [821] ending up in a loud *yai*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinarina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinarina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Mikingulas to enter the *milimika* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[39] The female initiates, the *Mikinastrinigas* assisted the *Mikinastrinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimika* in the same way as *Pintoma*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times.

One *Mikingula* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinastrina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinastrina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikinstaras*, *Mikiastarimas* and the fully initiated *Mikingulas*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[40]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin."

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon."

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky."

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kararijui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[41] These songs are called *kararijui imunka*.

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karslake Island (Wulrungku), and are playing there."

[39] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinastrina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinastrina* becomes a *Mikinstara* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikiastarima*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikingula*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikinstara* and *Mikiastarima*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[40] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[41] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

●[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararigui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Marayi*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

[224] On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven, and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jamparurai. 776

(9) Unakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palaneri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers. 773 776

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being. 776 842 787

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramaju described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child. [177]

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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and black seeds. The dotted rectangles, *c*, *c*, at the top and bottom of the paintings are lily-covered lagoons (dots represent the blossoms); the cross-hatched panels, *b*, *b*, etc., between them are spider webs in the trees and the meandering lines, *d*, *d*, etc., along the outer edge, a jungle vine hanging from the branches of the trees. The black design *h*, in the middle of the painting, is the beach at Imilu; the irregular circles, *g*, *g*, etc., are large rocks on the shore, and the dots, the eucalyptus trees that grow along the top of the cliff. The series of large rectangles, *m*, *m* (top and bottom) indicate the sandy shores of the lagoons, and the short vertical lines at *k* (bottom), a forest of eucalypts.

A large *pukamani* basket, Pl. 51A, B, C, D, pictures (*a*) Pl. 51A, B, the topography near the mission station at Garden Point, near Punata (Fig. 1), and (b) Pl. 51C, D, the surroundings near the expedition camp.

Punata (Garden Point)

The series of rectangles on the obverse side of the basket (Pl. 51A, B), represent a house at Garden Island mission. At *a*, are the foundations; *b*, *b*, the walls; *c*, *c*, the upright posts of the house; *d*, the beams of the roof, and at *e*, is the ridge pole.

At *f*, *f*, etc., on the upper edge, are the tall eucalyptus trees of the surrounding forest. At *j*, is the red ground on which the trees grow; at *g*, the dots are black and red seeds on the ground, and at *h*, the cross-hatching is the spider-webs in the trees.

At the bottom of the painting, *n*, *n*, etc., and *o*, *o*, etc., are more large eucalyptus trees. Symbols *k*, *k*, etc., and *m*, *m*, etc., represent hives of wild honey in the trees; the meandering lines at *s*, are jungle vines hanging from the branches; the cross-hatched areas are spider webs among the leaves, and the dots, as before, red and black seeds on the ground.

Snake Bay

The central black circle, *a*, on the reverse side of the basket, Pl. 51C, D, is a black rock in the sea, and the circle, *b*, immediately surrounding it, the broken water at its base, while circle *c*, indicates large rocks at the bottom of the cliffs, the white outer rectangle, *e*, being the sea-sand and the rectangle, *d*, the waves breaking on them. The white dots are the pebbles on the shore.

The upper and lower panels of the painting deal with the land. The white design *f*, on the upper edge, is a forest of large eucalyptus trees, and the cross-hatching, *g*, spider-webs on their branches. The five circles at *h*, are hives

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
● [177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[66]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[66] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

[114]
[773]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

has no other white inhabitants, while Melville is held under lease by the meat firm known as Vesteys Ltd., but has no permanent white inhabitants, though occasionally campers, beachcombers, and hunters from Darwin stay there for a few months.

All the earlier accounts lay stress on the ferocity and hostility of the natives of these islands, but long albeit intermittent contact with the whites has tamed them. At the present time it is no exaggeration to say that except for the Larakia, who are almost extinct, no tribe in the Northern Territory has so assimilated white ideas or is so familiar with white men. A proof of this is afforded by the fact that members of this tribe are more in demand in Darwin as houseboys than members of any other tribe, simply because, as it is generally expressed, they have more "savvy," that is they are more intelligent and more adaptable to white conditions.

But while their proximity to Darwin and their long experience of white men have taught them much of our ideas and customs, the absence of a permanent white settlement in their country with its consequent massacres and epidemics has on the other hand prevented their numbers being depleted and their social organization being broken down. It is therefore still possible to obtain fairly full and satisfactory information about the life and culture of these islands as they were before white influence began.

The ferocity of these people, I am convinced, has been much exaggerated even by the earliest settlers. As a matter of fact their outstanding characteristic is not their fierceness but their sense of humour, as noted by Spencer. They are constantly laughing, even at the most solemn moments, and this applies to practically every man, woman and child on the island. I am inclined to think that their superior physique, which is very apparent, their huge spears—which incidentally they seldom use, except ceremonially—their striking method of painting their faces and their years of conflict with the Malays, which had accustomed them to stand and fight rather than to run at sight of a stranger, gained them in large part their evil reputation.

In physical appearance they are certainly Australoid, but the men are on the whole taller, sturdier and better proportioned than any of the mainland tribes. This is obvious even in Darwin, where it is an easy matter to pick out almost at a glance a member of the Tiwi. I agree also with Sir Baldwin Spencer that they are superior to the mainlanders,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII-XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *vid* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcize, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

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Notes on The

takes the part of a hunter endeavouring to drive his spear into the enraged kangaroo on the opposite side of the ring. 527 535

Corroborees of the ship of war.—The next item in the ceremony appeals to us Europeans in a twofold sense. Firstly, the mimicry on the part of the aboriginal in an introduced scene is excellent: its effect being still more enhanced in that his artistic genius has expanded the original impressions by adequate interludes of his own invention and taste. Secondly, the observer's sentiment and appreciation are kindled afresh when he sees this savage folk, who are oft not credited with the possession of anything but vice and immorality, present to a subsequent and younger generation, scenes in living picture, which happened long ago in the days of the naval settlement of Fort Dundas. To us the records are available in the libraries throughout the world; to the aboriginal the events can only be handed down by tradition and such ceremonies as that which is now to be described. 177 527 535 [173 182]

The chorus or semicircular group of men have again started their rhythmical accompaniment by clapping upon the lateral aspect of their thighs with the arched palm of one hand. A performer rushes into the centre of the half-ring and, after going through a few preliminaries, stands with one of his legs placed a short distance in front of the other and slightly flexed at the knee. Throwing his head back and looking upwards, he starts a vigorous hauling action by alternately throwing one arm out in the direction he is looking, closing the fist and making an imaginary pull right down to his loins, while at the same time the opposite arm is thrown out and returned in a similar way. Accurate time is kept by the time-beaters. This act is in imitation of the hauling-in of a sail on a European man-of-war, such as the natives saw at Fort Dundas nearly a century ago. The performer now turns and runs to the opposite corner of the half-ring; the onlookers marking the time by clapping to it in a quickened beat produced with both hands upon their buttocks. The same act is repeated there several times. Next, the same hauling motion is continued, but reversed from below towards the body, in imitation of the hauling-up of an anchor. Several short and harsh interjections suggest the orders of the commanding officers and the whole ceremony, in fact, is reproduced with a suspicion of caricature upon the strictness of naval discipline. During this part of the performance, several cries of "poop" and "ish" are again sounded. The actor now moves about in the semicircle with the familiar stamping of feet and cutting out the most grotesque antics. He first extends his arms straight out on either side, throws his head back and moves his thorax laterally in a pendulous manner from the hips. Then he turns his arms through a right-angle frontwards, so that they project slantingly upwards, whence he again changes them to the former position. Then again he extends his arms downward and bends them so that the elbows project behind and his fists rest against his flanks, from which position they are presently changed to a straight pendulous one. After remaining in that position a short while, he suddenly throws them furiously upwards in front of him; the stamping, which has been

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 527 535 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene and many interjections of "poop" and "iah" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 535 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533 539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakomejona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yeh." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "trot" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiastic.

114 527 535 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the

[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred.

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art.

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[3]

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532

Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

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While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real defenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leadership. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yelmpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yelmpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on" he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yelmpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yelmpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durkheim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

(b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each other of contemplating an early trip to the Yelmpi country and therefore were in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

garded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker. The tribe thought of him in much the same way, the missionaries and anthropologist agreed with the estimate. Bob was essentially a "good boy." He never did anything wrong, never answered back, never spoke out of turn, never stepped out of line, never deviated from the behavior expected of him. He was, of course, too young in Tiwi categories to have any influence or importance. But it is hard to see how age could turn him into anything more positive than he was at 28, at which age he invited the comment that he had very little personality. About all that could be said is that he was a born follower and always tried to do the right thing, the right thing consisting in conforming to the expectations of whatever group he happened to be with at the moment. When with the tribe Bob did what the elders told him to do. If they disagreed among themselves, Bob waited until the majority decision was clear and then added his voice to the chorus of agreement. The same faithfulness which caused his white employers to label Bob "a good boy" caused the tribal elders to regard him as among the sounder of the young men, though they deplored his tendency to spend so much time in Darwin. But even on his trips to Darwin Bob did not depart too much from the norms for men of his age who had been children when the Mission came and who therefore constituted a post-white generation. He did not stay more than three or four months at a time in Darwin, he returned for all the steps of his initiation ceremonies, he observed his food and other taboos even when in Darwin, and during his sojourns there he never caused scandal back-home by getting into the slightest "trouble." He went to Darwin when the tribe could raise no valid objection to his going, he returned whenever his absence led to criticism. Bob was a barometer of which line offered the least resistance at any given time. His chief motivation seemed to be to escape public attention, to always be where he would attract the least notice.

The only occasion I ever saw Bob forced to emerge from the background and take the center of the stage was on one occasion when he returned from Darwin and was told by the local gossips that his wife had been unfaithful to him during his absence. The man involved was—not surprisingly—his brother Louis. This really put Bob on the spot. In pre-white days a youngster like Bob would not have had a wife, and therefore the situation of a man of Bob's tender years calling an older man to account for seducing his wife could not have arisen. The traditional pattern in seduction cases is for the husband, necessarily an older man, to accuse the alleged seducer, necessarily a young man and therefore a bachelor and a person of no importance, and demand vengeance on him. The accuser is, therefore, traditionally a man of weight and prestige and dignity, and carries on his case against the seducer with style and authority. The accused on the other hand, being young and a person of no importance, stands abashed, cowed and silent, looking guilty while the outranged husband showers him with tirades of abuse, followed finally by spears or throwing-sticks. In the case of Bob versus Louis the casting of these traditional roles was all wrong. Bob, overcome with embarrassment, did his best

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bordered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is notewofthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

[1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

[2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

[3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongoladu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

[4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

[5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

[6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

[7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite.

Sir:

121 Late in February, 1913, word came to Darwin that a fatal epidemic was prevalent in Bathurst and Melville Islands, and I was instructed to visit the islands and do anything possible to help.

122 I arrived at the Roman Catholic Mission Station at the southern end of Apsley Strait on Bathurst Island on March 2nd, and four days later, with the kindly assistance of Father Coudreau, set off up the Strait in a ten-foot sailing dinghy with a Malay, Matthew Gar, who had a smattering of the native language, two adult islanders, Mari and Dulin, a small native boy, Olinyarra, and stores. On the fourth day at Marinlampi, about two miles from Point Brace, at the northern end of the strait, a native camp was found. There were about thirty natives in the group, variously painted. 765 An old man, later found to be named Kerbo, was sitting chanting beside a small heap of red stones in the centre of a cleared circle about twelve feet in diameter. A pile of cooked yams was beside him and he was [177] scraping them with a mission-given knife. The time of my arrival was about ten in the morning. A small boy squatted beside the old man at times but otherwise the natives lounged about outside the circle indifferently coming and going. It appeared that a death ceremony was in progress. A woman sitting with her three boys under a pandanus palm nearby was pointed out as the mother of the dead man. When all the yams had been peeled the old man walked about in [593] the circle chanting and clacking two sticks together. There was an intermission until about 2 p.m., when the old man resumed his chanting. About 4 p.m. he returned again and proceeded to cut up the yams, placing

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

like this word. They also have a strange way of twisting words; for example Port Darwin is called *Pudarnap*.

The Future. The people themselves are—in Mr. Harney's opinion—mentally lazy, and hold a curious mixture of mission and native teaching. Although Christians—Roman Catholics—believing in God, they have a fixed dread of *Marutdje*, the rainbow serpent. The good that the mission would do is limited by two facts, in spite of the sincere labours of the missionaries: (1) there is no fixed progressive policy with regard to material advancement. The missions are not self-supporting, probably owing to the poor quality of the soil around that part. (2) The younger natives have too easy an entrance into Darwin. They reach it by short stages with canoe from Melville Island. Moreover, their presence in the town is always welcome and encouraged, because it means cheap labour for the white people. Unfortunately, it is the beginning of the end for the native.

One thing is urgently required if they are to be saved: (1) complete control forcing them to stay on their Islands; these provide plenty of native food. And (2) subsidizing of the mission to do "controlled work" in line with government policy. Apart from that, but only if necessary, a station, such as at Garden Point, could be opened and attention given to the medical and other needs of the islanders, in particular, of the aged and sick.

W. E. HARNEY.
A. P. ELKIN.

11:Goodale E-5 (1964, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

CE20 TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11 (B)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OE20 Tiwi OE20

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kulama* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

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[177]

For instance, The composer of the following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kulama* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P.14,(1)]

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual
[189] served another purpose as well: because traveling is so difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals
[171] strangely similar to those that underlie the American way of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
●177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes
[181] and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[224] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
[868] a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on
177 the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
884 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*. During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families.

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace.

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives,

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches, cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grow among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Joe Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles. Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless